

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan's (FL-13) called today for the House to pass legislation he introduced to improve the Small Business Administration's (SBA) small business counseling program. The House is expected to pass the "Job Creation Through Entrepreneurship Act" (H.R. 2352) today. The bill includes the "Retired Executives Building Better Businesses Act" authored by Buchanan to modernize the SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) program.

"Small businesses create 70% of new jobs in this country," said Buchanan on the floor of the House. "Their success is vital to our economic recovery. For years, SCORE has been providing entrepreneurs with free, confidential, and valuable small business advice. My legislation will help ensure qualified SCORE volunteers are available to provide one-on-one advice and counsel to small business owners in Florida and across the country."

The SCORE program provides entrepreneurs with the small business advice of working and retired executive volunteers. Buchanan's bill would require SCORE administrators to actively recruit and maintain volunteer mentors and track their success. Counselors would be required to have at least ten years of similar experience.

The job creating small business assistance bill includes a total of seven bipartisan bills and represents the first overhaul of the SBA's entrepreneurial development programs in a decade. In addition to expanding SCORE, the measure expands Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) and Women's Business Centers (WBCs). The legislative package also creates new support services for veteran-owned and Native American-owned small businesses, online learning programs to help entrepreneurs in rural regions and underserved communities, and a grant program to help small firms secure capital.

Buchanan is a member of the House Small Business Committee and the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Finance and Taxes.

This week is National Small Business Week, a five-day event intended to spotlight the accomplishments of America's entrepreneurs.

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